

NPL Site Narrative for Kaiser Aluminum (Mead Works)

KAISER ALUMINUM (MEAD WORKS)

Mead, Washington

Conditions at listing (December 1982): Kaiser Aluminum's Mead Works is located near the town of Mead in Spokane County, Washington. Cyanide, originating from a 6-acre pile of spent pot liners on the plant property, was first noticed in several drinking water wells in 1978. The cyanide has contaminated an aquifer which is a tributary to the Little Spokane River. The company provided alternative water supplies to 27 homes with contaminated wells and paved the old pot-liner pile with impervious asphalt. Since 1980, the pot liner wastes being generated have been placed in a specially constructed building.

Status (July 1983): Kaiser continues to take corrective actions, including the elimination of a retention pond. Water in the pond was infiltrating the contaminated soil beneath the storage pile and probably carrying cyanide into the aquifer. Kaiser reports that the elimination of the pond has significantly reduced the cyanide levels in certain test wells near the pile. Kaiser expects that improvements will continue and that the aquifer will eventually be cleaned by normal inflow of uncontaminated ground water.

No additional remedial actions are scheduled. Kaiser will continue monitoring for an extended period to determine if the cyanide is being contained effectively.

For more information about the hazardous substances identified in this narrative summary, including general information regarding the effects of exposure to these substances on human health, please see the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) ToxFAQs. ATSDR ToxFAQs can be found on the Internet at [ATSDR - ToxFAQs](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaq/index.asp) (<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaq/index.asp>) or by telephone at 1-888-42-ATSDR or 1-888-422-8737.